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Poverty in Illinois

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Local Illinois Developments

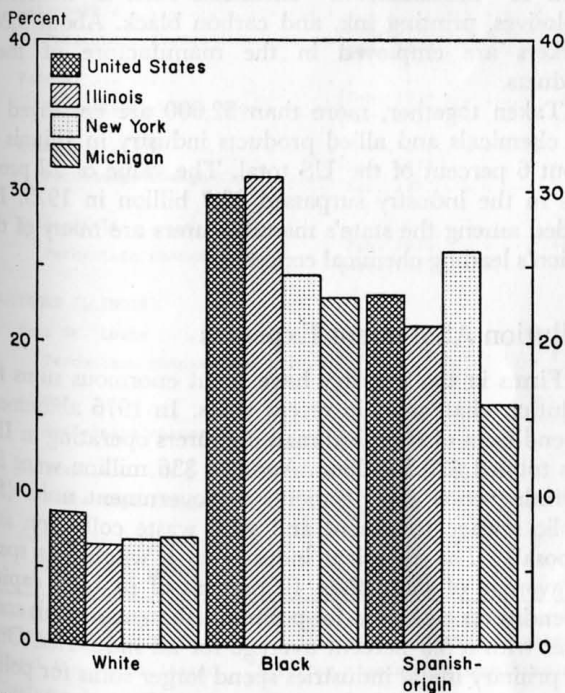
Poverty in Illinois

The Bureau of the Census recently released the results of the Survey of Income and Education taken in April through July 1976, which provides estimates of families, unrelated individuals, and persons by money income and poverty status in 1975. The survey updates the 1970 Census money income and poverty estimates.

The concept and definition of poverty is complex and has been the subject of a number of studies by government agencies. The poverty statistics presented in this report are based on a definition developed by the Social Security Administration in 1964 and revised by a Federal Interagency Committee in 1969. Annual revisions of the SSA poverty thresholds were originally based only on the average per capita cost of the foods in the economy food budget, but now reflect changes in the consumer price index. The thresholds are computed on a national basis only.

In Illinois in 1975, 577,000 people in families with female head, no husband present, were below the poverty

Percentage of Three Racial Groups Below Poverty Level, 1975



Bureau of Economic and Business Research

Illinois Business Indexes

Item	Mar. 1978 (1967 =100)	Percentage change from	
		Feb. 1978	Mar. 1977
Employment-manufacturing ¹	88.8 ^{a,b}	- 0.0	+ 0.7
Weekly earnings-manufacturing ¹	213.5	+ 0.9	+ 8.0
Consumer prices in Chicago ²	186.3	+ 1.1	+ 8.1
Life insurance sales (ordinary) ³	297.7	+ 23.9	+15.7
Retail sales ⁴	219.0 ^a	+ 20.7	+ 1.7
Farm prices ⁵	211.0	+ 3.9	+ 7.1
Building permits-residential ⁶	90.6	+112.2	-27.6
Coal production ⁶	8.0	...	-91.8
Petroleum production ⁷	37.9	+ 5.5	-17.7

¹Ill. Dept. of Labor; ²US Bureau of Labor Statistics; ³Life Ins. Agcy. Manag. Assn.; ⁴US Dept. of Commerce; ⁵Ill. Crop Rpts.; ⁶Ill. Dept. of Mines; ⁷Ill. Geol. Survey.

^aPreliminary. ^bData for February 1978 compared with January 1978 and February 1977.

level — 42.3 percent compared with 35.2 percent nationally. Of the people living in female-headed families with related children under 18, 56.9 percent (382,000) lived in poverty; the national figure for this category was 49.0 percent. In all Illinois families, 936,000 persons were below the poverty level — 9.4 percent compared with 10.0 percent in the nation as a whole. There were 546,000 people in families with related children under 18 below the poverty level, 16.1 percent compared with 15.3 percent nationally.

Of 9,181,000 whites in Illinois in 1975, 6.7 percent were below the poverty level; of 1,685,000 blacks, 31.0 percent lived in poverty; and of 412,000 people of Spanish origin, 21.1 percent received poverty-level incomes. The position of Illinois was somewhat better than the national level for whites and people of Spanish origin, but not as good for blacks (see chart, which also shows two other large industrial states).

The low-income concept has been developed in order to identify, in dollar terms, a minimum level of income adequacy for families of different types in keeping with American consumption patterns. The national income threshold for a nonfarm family of four with male head and two children under 18 years of age was \$5,456. For a single male under 65 years of age the poverty threshold was \$2,902; for a single female under 65, \$2,685.

The findings of a recent detailed review of the poverty definition are summarized in *The Measure of Poverty*, available from Mr. George Grob, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Room 445-G Humphrey Building, Washington, DC 20201.